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# LETTERS

TO THE HON. FRANCIS LEMIEUX,

Chief Commissioner Public Works,

ON

CANADIAN TRADE AND NAVIGATION,

AND

TO THE CITIZENS OF MONTREAL,

ON THE

COMMERCE OF THE CITY AND THE MEANS OF ITS  
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

BY THE HON. JOHN YOUNG, M. P. P.

Montreal:

PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL, ST. NICHOLAS STREET.  
1855.



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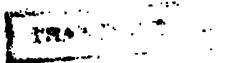
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*Douglas*  
5-23-41  
*Transcript*

TO THE HON. F. LEMIEUX,  
*Chief Commissioner Public Works.*

SIR,—If any apology were necessary for addressing to you this letter, such apology might easily be found in your position as the head of the Department of Public Works, and in the great importance of the subject of improving our Canadian navigation, and the probable effects of such improvements on the trade of Canada. But in addition to this, it is becoming every day more evident that the trade of the Province demands greater facilities, and the more so from the results which have attended the recent changes in legislation as affecting trade.

It was in 1846 that England inaugurated her new commercial policy. Previous to that time the people of Canada enjoyed certain advantages for their lumber and agricultural products in the markets of the mother country, and on the other hand they were compelled to pay a differential duty if they employed a foreign ship, or imported foreign goods, except through a British warehouse. The United States had not then passed their draw-back or bonding bill, allowing Canadian produce or foreign merchandise to pass through the United States in bond. Hence Upper Canadian trade was forced through the route of the St. Lawrence, and centered almost exclusively in the cities of Quebec and Montreal. Protection to Canadian produce in the English market ceased in 1847. Differential duties were repealed in the same year. The St. Lawrence canals were opened for traffic in 1849, and in the same year the United States draw-back or bonding bill came into operation. By this bill Canadians could import foreign goods through the United States in bond, and ship Canadian produce also in bond for exportation at United States Atlantic ports. The trade of the Western States, and of Canada West, was thus thrown open to competition, and the rivalry for the carrying trade of the Great West was fairly begun between Canada and the State of New York.

How this rivalry is to end, whether in the destruction of Canadian trade, by the absorption of her products, and of the western

carrying trade into the channels of conveyance, centering in New York, or whether the natural facilities of Canada shall be so improved as to secure a fair share of this gigantic and ever increasing traffic, will, in my opinion, depend upon the action which shall be taken by the Department of Public Works, and by the people of Canada, as to the improvements to which I shall shortly allude.

A glance at the map of Canada, and at her chain of Public Works, will shew her present means of competition for this trade, and suggest the means of enlarging that trade indefinitely. The advantages possessed by Canada are to be found in her natural position, in her lakes and the St. Lawrence, in the Welland Canal connecting Lake Erie with Lake Ontario, in the St. Lawrence canals connecting inland with ocean navigation. She has also her nominal tolls and Provincial tug-boats. New York, as a means of competition, has her Erie Canal. She has also the advantages of her railroads, but, as I will shortly shew, these roads have not been able to compete with canal for heavy freight, or even materially to diminish it; so that the advantages of the State of New York may be said to be limited to the possession of the Erie Canal. And yet look at the results, and see what a warning and incitement they afford to the people of Canada.

Let it be remembered that previous to 1849, before the United States bonding bill came into operation, there was no exportation of cereals from Canada into the United States, or next to none. But what has been the amount of wheat and flour so exported since that date? Reducing wheat into flour, the amount will be found to be as follows:

In 1849.....	24,936 barrels.
" 1852.....	466,912 "
" 1854.....	762,575 "

Look now at the quantity of wheat and flour received by canal and river at Montreal:

In 1846.....	967,286 barrels.
" 1852.....	710,749 "
" 1854.....	594,394 "

These figures establish but too clearly the course which the trade has been taking; and the results of the trade of this season, when officially known, will prove that a larger proportion than ever of Western Canada cereals has found a passage into the

United States. In other words, that the carrying trade of Upper Canada products, by the St. Lawrence and the Canadian canals, is rapidly decreasing, and that of the State of New York rapidly increasing. A single fact will conclusively establish this disagreeable truth. During the four weeks ending on the 31st of October, the quantity of *Canadian wheat* received at the Port of Oswego alone, was 627,000 bushels, whilst the total receipts of Canadian wheat by canal and river at Montreal, from the opening of navigation to the same date, was only 104,677 bushels.

The increase of importation from the United States into Canada, since the passing of the draw-back bill, will be evident from the following:

Value of imports from United States in 1849,	\$5,724,806
" " "	" 1854, 17,300,736

The same warning and incitements are afforded to us as Canadians from a glance at a few more general facts as to the comparative movement of property on the Erie Canal and on the St. Lawrence canals. These facts conclusively establish the practical superiority of the present routes by the United States over the Canadian route.

The total movement of property on the Erie Canal, was :

In 1853.....	4,000,000 tons.
--------------	-----------------

On the St. Lawrence canals :

In 1853.....	561,000 tons.
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Difference,.....	3,439,000 "
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The average receipts of vegetable food at tide water in the Hudson River, reduced to barrels, was, as near as possible, for the years 1851, 1852 and 1853..... 8,000,000 barrels.

The average receipts by canal and river at Montreal, for the same period, was equal to..... 750,000 barrels,

---

Difference,.....	7,250,000 "
------------------	-------------

The receipts of grain alone at Oswego and Buffalo, during October and November of this year, exceed 5 millions of bushels, while the total receipts of all kinds of grain at Montreal, by river and canal, since the opening of navigation up to the 30th Nov., from both Canada West and the Western States, was only 1,300,000 bushels.

The average exports for the years 1851, 1852 and 1853, of vegetable food at the Port of New York, was equal to 3,000,000 barrels.

The average export of such food at Quebec and Montreal, for the same period, was only..... 652,000 barrels.

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Difference,.....	2,348,000	"
------------------	-----------	---

It would be easy to multiply facts to establish the same general result, but the figures above given will sufficiently shew that which we can neither deny nor controvert, namely, that the trade in the lower St. Lawrence in the produce of the West is paltry and insignificant, compared with what it ought to be, and compared with that by the Erie Canal ;—that our present facilities for transporting property are wholly inadequate to secure successful competition with the more southern routes. It is in vain to overlook or undervalue the result ; it is forced upon us every year more and more plainly, and was foreseen by every intelligent merchant acquainted with the Western business, and is corroborated by other facts.

Let us look for a moment at the rates of transport by these routes, and the comparative rates of freight, to the markets in the Eastern States and in Great Britain. The freight of a barrel of flour from Oswego to the City of New York is from five to ten cents less than the freight from Montreal to New York or Boston, by any means of transport we now have. The freight from Toronto or other ports on Lake Ontario to Montreal varies, but taken at the lowest rate of twenty cents per barrel, and with a freight of fifty cents, from Montreal to New York or Boston, we have thus seventy cents, against forty-five cents from Toronto to New York and Boston, at which rate freight has been freely taken this season.

Again, the supply of cereals for the trade of Maine, which we expected to have almost completely in our own hands, by the construction of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad, finds its way from the West through the Erie Canal to New York during the summer months, and thence to Portland, at a less cost of transport than by Montreal by railroad, although the cost of transport from Longueuil to Portland, a distance of 292 miles, is only forty-five cents per barrel,—a fact equally full of warning and incitement as those to which I have alluded above.

It is also a fact which admits of no controversy that the Reciprocity Treaty, by which the St. Lawrence was made free to American vessels, has failed to attract any of the American vessels on the upper lakes through the St. Lawrence to the ocean. Not a ton of American shipping, in so far as I am aware, has as yet chosen this route, which it was contended it could not fail to take were the River St. Lawrence thrown open to American vessels. Reciprocity has given increased facilities to American traders to deal with us. We admit American vessels to registry; the Americans do not admit ours. We admit Americans to the free navigation of the St. Lawrence and of our canals; we have not the privilege of navigating the canals of New York, or the Hudson River. All foreign goods coming from the United States are admitted into Canada on the same terms as from the place of growth. But if a Canadian merchant imports more tea or coffee than he can dispose of in Canada, he cannot send it to the United States, for there he would be charged with a twenty per cent. duty, whilst from the place of growth tea and coffee are admitted free. It may be also mentioned that our tariff throws additional difficulties in the way of Canadian trade. It is based on false principles, and directly tends to divert trade from the St. Lawrence to the United States Atlantic ports.

Such are some of the difficulties with which Canadian trade has to contend. The practical questions, therefore, that present themselves to every one desirous of advancing the trade and prosperity of Canada are these: How shall Canada be able to compete successfully with the State of New York for this great trade? Is the stream of western commerce to continue to find cheaper outlets by United States ports on Lake Ontario to the Atlantic than by any route furnished by Canada through its canals and the lower St. Lawrence? Shall the present superiority in cheapness, of the New York water communication, continue or even increase, and our trade dwindle away into a yet more inconsiderable amount? Are Maine and the Eastern States to draw the western supplies through channels of transport so circuitous as those indicated? Are the waters of the St. Lawrence, and the noble lakes by which it is fed, to be crossed over merely by the export and import trade of Upper Canada and the great West, or is that trade to descend those waters till it meets ocean vessels with freight from every quarter of the globe.

For my own part I think these questions can be answered satisfactorily. The remedy for these evils seems to me as evident as the evils themselves; were it not so, it would serve but little purpose to dwell upon the present unpromising but not hopeless condition of our trade. I believe it is yet in the power of the people and government of Canada to adopt measures which will enable us to compete successfully for the carrying trade of the West, and make our public works a source of great and growing revenue to the country. I believe it is not too late to attract trade from American to Canadian channels, and thus greatly to benefit trade on the St. Lawrence, without any injury, but on the contrary with great benefit to the interests of Upper Canada.

I need not say that I have uniformly opposed any scheme for forcing trade through the St. Lawrence at the expense of Upper Canada. In 1852, I resigned the office which you now fill, when an Upper Canadian member of the ministry sought to protect trade by the St. Lawrence by a system of Differential Duties, which I conceived and still conceive to be mischievous in principle, and highly unequal and unjust to the people of Upper Canada. And with that office I was forced to abandon the principal object which induced me to become a member of Government, the hope of influencing through the Government, and from the position I occupied in the Department of Public Works, two great projects of improving our means of transport—projects which I had long had at heart, and which whilst in your position I strongly urged and have continued to urge, and now press upon you as the great remedies for our present depressed and diminishing trade, namely—

**First.—THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE WELLAND CANAL; and,**

**Second.—THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CANAL TO CONNECT THE ST. LAWRENCE WITH LAKE CHAMPLAIN.**

Let me attempt to state my reasons for supporting these as the great remedial projects for the evils to which I have alluded. If these projects can be shewn to be practicable, and if it can be shewn that the large amount which the trade of Canada West has for some years past paid to American forwarders, and to support American canals and American railroads, (a sum which for this year alone will exceed *four hundred thousand dollars*,) can be transferred to the Canadian Treasury without increased charge on the trade of Upper Canada, I can have no doubt that these

projects will be supported by the whole Province, and by none more strongly than by the intelligent and enterprising people of Upper Canada.

In the first place then there are certain facts which those most intimately acquainted with the subject will be the least inclined to doubt, namely ; that by far the largest share of all Western products arriving at the tide waters of the Hudson *are not exported but are consumed in the Eastern States* ;—that of cereals alone, out of equal to eight million barrels, the average receipts of the three years above alluded to, five millions were consumed and only three millions exported. Now, in my opinion, Canada has it in her power, by means of her position and natural advantages, and by the construction of these works above mentioned, to become the carrier of a large part, I believe the larger part, of these five million barrels, by a route cheaper and quicker than any now existing or that can be constructed in the United States. If so we shall be able successfully to compete for the great import and export trade to the West, and to attract that trade via the St. Lawrence to the ocean.

Let us now look fairly at the effects which the trade so attracted would have on the prosperity of Canada, and the cost of transport by the present routes.

Ships and steamers arriving at New York and Boston, with freight and passengers principally destined for the West, having made a profitable voyage out, are prepared to carry freight back at very low rates. On the other hand the great bulk of the ships coming to the St. Lawrence arrive in ballast and depend alone on the home voyage for their profit. The following table will point out this important fact, and at the same time demonstrate the necessity of increased facilities being obtained for the transport of property through the St. Lawrence. The freight of a barrel of flour in seven months, say from 1st May till 1st December, from Montreal and New York respectively, was in the years here quoted, as follows :

NEW YORK TO LIVERPOOL.		MONTRÉAL TO LIVERPOOL.	
Average in 1846.....	2s. 8d. Stg.	Average in 1846.....	5s. 2d. Stg.
Range from 1s. 9d. to 5s.		Range from 4s. 6d. to 6s.	
Average in 1847.....	3 9 "	Average in 1847.....	5 4 "
Range from 1s. to 2s. 6d.		Range from 3s. 6d. to 7s.	
Average in 1848.....	1 8 "	Average in 1848.....	4 2 "
Range from 1s. to 2s. 6d.		Range from 2s. 9d. to 6s.	

Average in 1849,....	1s. 7½d. Stg.	Average in 1849,....	8s. 6d. Stg.
Range from 6d. to 2s. 3d.		Range from 3s. to 4s. 3d.	
Average in 1850,....	1 3½ "	Average in 1850,....	3 0½ "
Range from 9d. to 1s. 9d.		Range from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 9d.	
Average in 1851,....	1 1¼ "	Average in 1851,....	2 11½ "
Range from 8d. to 1s. 9d.		Range from 2s. 4d. to 3s. 7½d.	
Average in 1852,....	1 4½ "	Average in 1852,....	2 11½ "
Range from 9d. to 3s. 6d.		Range from 2s. 7d. to 4s.	
Average in 1853,....	2 6 "	Average in 1853,....	4 3½ "
Range from 1s. 6d. to 3s. 6d.		Range from 3s. 9d. to 5s. 9d.	
Average in 1854,....	2 6 "	Average in 1854,....	3 2 "
Range from 2s. to 3s. 1d.		Range from 2s. to 3s. 9d.	

Shewing an average higher cost of 100 per cent. in these nine years in ocean freight, by the Montreal route.

To secure then cheapness in the freight of exports, it is essential to procure a steady and abundant supply of out freights ; and thus the freights both ways will be lowered. It is to be borne in mind that a very important and profitable outward freight is obtained by the ships and steamers arriving by sea at New York and Boston getting large numbers of emigrant passengers destined for the West. These passengers might easily be attracted through our waters. Let it be borne in mind that Toronto is as near Liverpool, via the St. Lawrence and the Straits of Belle Isle, as New York is by the ordinary sea route. If large and commodious steamers could come down through our improved canals with western produce, carrying equal to 7000 barrels of flour, and there meet the ocean vessel at Montreal or Quebec, it may fairly be expected that both freight and passengers would be attracted to a route which by means of but a single transhipment would convey them from any foreign port to the cities of the West. The emigrant would thus be saved the vexations and expence which he meets with at every point in the route through the United States, where transhipments are now necessary. He would be able to make his contract with the owners of vessels at Quebec for his passage to a point near his final destination; nay, it would be easy to adopt means by which he could obtain a ticket from the owners of the ocean vessel at the port of embarkation, which would secure his passage through. In addition to this, the route by the St. Lawrence is made in considerably shorter time than through the United States. A propeller of ordinary speed leaving Quebec will reach Toronto in three days and Cleveland in five days, while

the average voyage by canal boats from Albany to Buffalo is about twelve days. It is no less true whatever may have been stated to the contrary, that freights by the St. Lawrence can be despatched as early and as late in the season by the route of the St. Lawrence as can be done by the water communication of the United States. Let the season be late or early, goods arriving at Quebec in the spring from sea reach the upper lakes, by means of our steamers, earlier than any goods shipped from Albany by the Erie Canal. In the same way vessels from the west arrive at Montreal in the spring generally eight to ten days earlier than boats from Buffalo arrive at Albany. Western produce, in like manner, destined for fall shipment to sea at New York or Montreal can be sent off through the St. Lawrence later in the season than can be done by passing through the Erie Canal to New York. It may therefore reasonably be inferred that with these advantages and increased facilities freights on the home voyage from Quebec and Montreal would be reduced to something near the rates at New York, and the outward freight be diminished proportionably.

The cost of transportation from original ports of shipment in the upper lakes is computed at \$1.50 more per ton to Oswego, including Welland Canal tolls, than the cost from the same ports to Buffalo and Dunkirk. Oswego is, however, 158 miles (by canal) nearer the tide waters of the Hudson than Buffalo, and the canal cost of transport for this 158 miles is computed at \$2.37 per ton. It was to be expected therefore that the opening of the Welland Canal would produce important results on the trade of Oswego, and experience has shown these results to have been highly beneficial to that port. It is only a few years since that the receipts of property at Buffalo from the West were three times as great as the receipts at Oswego; now the receipts at Oswego are greater than those at Buffalo. This very important fact demonstrates the effect of increased natural navigation in cheapening transport. Oswego is thereby enabled to compete to a very remarkable extent with her great and enterprising rival, and this notwithstanding the avowed superiority which Buffalo enjoys of employing boats and propellers of a larger class than can arrive at Oswego by the present routes, thus manifestly cheapening freights. Vessels of 750 tons, drawing 9½ and 10 feet water, (the largest the lake harbors will admit,) constantly arrive at Buffalo, whilst the western trade of

Oswego is limited to vessels of half the size, in consequence of the two sets of locks on the Welland Canal, the one being of 26 feet, the other of 45 feet, in width.

But unless increased facilities can be secured, the trade of Oswego and that of the St. Lawrence is destined soon to be seriously interfered with and diminished, by the enlargement of the Erie Canal. The State of New York has determined that in 1858 the Erie Canal shall possess double its present capacity for transport, and no one acquainted with the enterprise of that State can for a moment doubt that that determination will be carried into effect, if not within the time mentioned, at least at no very distant date. Oswego will then be less able to compete with the Erie Canal and with the large vessels arriving at Buffalo from the upper lakes. Whatever may be said, therefore, as to the effect of the great project to which I have alluded on the trade of the St. Lawrence, I think it will not be denied that if Oswego is to continue to compete with Buffalo for the western trade, the Welland Canal must be enlarged, so that the vessel of 750 tons can come to her port from the ports on the upper lakes, and it is for us carefully to consider and to endeavour to realise for ourselves the benefits which have already resulted to Oswego from our present canals, and which will undoubtedly increase should the enlargement of the Welland be carried into effect.

If Oswego has attained her present position as a depot for western commerce, by the means I have pointed out, by the saving on lake and river navigation instead of that by the 158 miles of Canal navigation, consider for a moment the effect which would be produced on her prosperity if vessels of 750 tons could come directly to her port instead of as at present in vessels of 300 tons.

And it may fairly be asked, why should not a proportionable success attend the opening of the lower St. Lawrence to vessels of such large tonnage? If such a vessel could proceed by *river navigation* to Montreal or to Quebec, to meet the ocean vessel, with only one transhipment between the original lake shipping port and Liverpool, or any other port abroad to which the cargo may be sent, what is there to prevent the reduction of freight, or the increase of products for transportation in proportion to, and as a consequence of such reduction? From the experience I have had, and

the attention given to the whole subject of western transport for many years, I have no hesitation in giving it as my opinion that so great would be the advantages of such a navigation on such a scale through the St. Lawrence to the ocean, that the present superiority of the route through the Erie Canal would be terminated; —that we should be able successfully to compete with the Erie Canal even when enlarged;—and that Montreal and Quebec would then become the great, as they now are the natural depots, for the export and import trade of the West.

One is scarcely able to conceive the magnitude and importance, to the whole of Canada, of such a trade flowing through such a channel. As surely as water seeks a lower and lower level, till it reaches the ocean, so surely and steadily will commerce find out the cheapest and easiest channels. The instincts and necessities of commerce must sooner or later open up and fully develop the magnificent water communications with which Providence has favored this part of the world. It rests with us to say how far and how speedily we shall contribute to secure this end. More especially does it rest upon you, as the head of the Department of Public Works, and upon the Provincial Government, seriously to consider whether it is not a duty in the interests of Canada to lay before the Provincial Parliament without delay a well considered scheme for the opening up such a communication.

But suppose the Welland Canal enlarged, and a direct route for large craft thereby opened to the ocean from the upper lakes, then questions of scarcely less importance present themselves, whether it is not possible to secure a speedier and cheaper route than is yet opened for communication between New York and the West, and if so what is likely to be the effect upon Canada of such improved route. This brings me to the second of the great projects to which I wish to direct attention, that, namely, of a **SHIP CANAL TO CONNECT THE ST. LAWRENCE WITH LAKE CHAMPLAIN.**

In so far as I can judge, the opinion of enlightened men has gradually come round, and is now manifesting itself in favour of such a route. Unfortunately the matter was for some time mixed up with the question of location. I have always held and am more than ever convinced that that location is the best which will best secure the object for which the canal should be built, namely, the cheapening of freight and the facilities to trade generally; and

the location by which these objects can be shewn to be best promoted, I shall always be prepared to support.

Let us look now at the obstacles to be surmounted in the construction of this work. The ridge of land which divides the northern end of Lake Champlain from the St. Lawrence is about 25 miles across. Three separate locations for the canal have been made, making the length of canal 28, 32 and 34 miles, with a lockage of 25 feet from the St. Lawrence into the lake, while by another location there is  $37\frac{1}{2}$  feet of lockage. The cost is estimated at from \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000.

From these statements it must be evident that the project of a ship canal must sooner or later have suggested itself to every intelligent observer of the natural position of the trade of the northern part of this continent. It was only, however, in 1846 that the capabilities and importance of such a route were first suggested and discussed, and it is a matter of just pride to myself and to those who laboured to turn public attention towards the project, that of the many distinguished engineers and public men who have devoted attention to the subject, *not one*, in so far as I can recollect, has expressed an opinion unfavorable to the project; on the contrary their expressed opinions have uniformly tended to support it. J. B. Mills, Esq., an eminent engineer, under direction of the Public Works Department, made the first survey in 1846, and strongly advised the immediate commencement of the work. The Hon. W. B. Robinson, Chief Commissioner, in his Public Works Report of 1848, says of this work :

“ A survey, map and estimate of this important Provincial Work  
“ have been prepared by Mr. Mills, an engineer of much talent and  
“ experience, and transmitted to His Excellency.

“ The importance of this work cannot be over estimated; its  
“ construction would be the certain means of attracting through the  
“ Welland and St. Lawrence Canals an immense traffic, that now  
“ finds its way to the New York and Boston markets from Buffalo  
“ via the Erie Canal. Vessels from Chicago could, and no doubt,  
“ would go direct from that place to Burlington or Whitehall with  
“ their cargoes, and in time to Albany and New York, as there is  
“ little doubt the Northern Canal from Whitehall, at the foot of  
“ Lake Champlain, to the Hudson would be enlarged to a schooner  
“ canal within a few years after the St. Lawrence and Champlain

"Canal shall have been made. Of the immense amount of upward freight for supplying the rapidly increasing wants of the populous Western States, a very small portion passes through the Welland and none at all through the St. Lawrence Canals. Were the canal contemplated in operation, there is no doubt this Province would benefit by the passage through it of a very large amount of merchandise which, by the exaction of a moderate toll would yield a considerable revenue, and go far toward repaying the costs of our Public Works.

"But the importance of this canal is not confined to a consideration of mere revenue, or as the means of transport for American product and merchandise. The lumber trade of Upper Canada generally, and of the Ottawa in particular, would be most essentially benefited by its construction. For all sawed lumber the United States offers the best market, and it could be conveyed thither from any port on the upper lakes, or from the Ottawa River below Bytown, without transhipment, thus adding materially to its value.

"There is little doubt but that a large number of the emigrants who annually arrive in New York would also select this route as the cheapest and most comfortable for reaching their destination in the Western States. Propellers of 300 tons burthen would take them on board at Whitehall, or at Burlington if from Boston, land them, without the trouble and annoyance of transhipment, at any port on the western lakes between Lake Champlain and Chicago, stopping by the way at places where they could obtain all description of supplies at moderate prices.

"Mr. Mills has entered fully into the particulars of the costs of constructing this canal, to shew the utmost limit to which the amount may extend, in order to render the work complete in all respects, and his estimate, it is believed, is ample for that purpose; at the same time, there is no doubt, it may be effected, so far as to be in successful use, for a sum considerably less. The cost of acquiring the necessary quantity of land, through which the canal would pass, and securing the banks from damage by lining them with stone, as well as the amount set down for contingencies, may, with good management, be curtailed. The total cost as estimated by Mr. Mills, is £453,602, and he has been careful to provide for every contingency that is likely to arise in the prosecution of

" such a work and by so doing to avoid the very common complaint  
" against engineers of making an under-estimate.

" The Commissioners respectfully recommend this great work to  
" the most favorable consideration of the Government, conceiving  
" that its early construction is imperatively called for to complete  
" the chain of canals already in use, and to render them profitable,  
" as well as a convenience to the Province.

" The Commissioners are aware that a diversity of opinion exists  
" as to the best route to be selected for this important canal; but  
" they are satisfied that a careful examination of Mr. Mills' line, as  
" shewn in his map, and a due consideration of all the reasons  
" given by him for its adoption, will convince any reasonable person  
" that the one selected by him is the best."

The Hon. Mr. Merritt, in his Public Works Report in 1848, recommended a ship canal to connect the St. Lawrence with Lake Champlain, and stated "that its early construction is imperatively called for to complete the chain of canals already in use, and to render them profitable as well as a convenience to the Province."

In 1851, Mr. Killaly and myself, in the Public Works Report of that year, referred to these works at great length, and stated that we fully concurred with the views of Mr. Merritt, and "that until this work is constructed our canals will fail to compete successfully with the Erie Canal and railways on the south bank of the St. Lawrence, in the transport of property to and from the Atlantic seaboard in the United States, and with the Western States and Canada." The House of Assembly in 1853 passed the following Resolutions in favor of the construction of the work by a vote of 37 to 6:

1st. *Resolved*,—That from the proximity of Lake Champlain to the River Hudson and St. Lawrence, the trifling elevation of the summits which divide them, and the natural advantages the great chain of lakes and rivers leading into the interior possess, the construction of a canal to connect the St. Lawrence with the River Richelieu or Lake Champlain, of sufficient dimensions to admit the largest class of steamers from Lake Ontario to Whitehall, would materially cheapen the rates of transportation between Lake Erie and New York, regain the trade of the West through its natural channel, the St. Lawrence, and increase the revenue from tolls on all our leading Public Works.

2nd. *Resolved*,—That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor Général, to communicate the preceding Resolution, and to recommend the subject thereof to the attentive consideration of His Excellency.

Messrs. Chabot and Killaly, in their Public Works Report for June, 1854, referring to the Reciprocity Treaty and the opening of the St. Lawrence to the United States, say, “that the full “benefit may be had from these measures, and that the course of “trade, which it is in our power to secure, may not be diverted “from these natural channels, which should be legitimate sources “of revenue to us, works of no ordinary extent are indispensable, “amongst the foremost of which are the enlarging of the Welland “Canal, or rather giving to it a second tier of locks of increased “dimensions, in such a course as may be found most advisable ; “and also the connecting of the waters of the St. Lawrence by canal “with those of Lake Champlain.” They add that they “do not “consider it necessary to urge the importance of the latter again “upon the attention of the public, further than referring to the last “Report of this Department, pages 31 to 38 inclusive ; and by “stating as their opinion that, strong as the reasons then were for “embarking in that work, they are infinitely enforced by the pros-“pect of the treaty which may be had from the proposed treaty “and opening of the St. Lawrence.”

The Chairman of the Committee on Commerce at Washington, in his Report to Congress in 1852, says : “This increased trade, “together with the rapidly increasing stream from the north-west, “would soon overflow present channels of trade, and render neces-“sary a project which, in its conception and future results, is second “to none of our great works of internal improvement.”

Mr. Jarvis, in his Report to Government in 1854, in reference to the canal into Lake Champlain, says : “The area of country “capable of supplying commerce to the lakes is estimated by Mr. “McAlpine at 550,000 square miles. Although but a small pro-“portion of it is yet settled, it furnishes at this time a supply of “one and a-half millions of tons, and has doubled its produce with-“in the last five years. The trade of this boundless country, “including that lying west of Lake Superior, which in a few years “will be intersected by railways to the base of the Rocky Mountains, “and in due time to the Pacific Ocean, will warrant any judicious

" expenditure to facilitate and cheapen transportation by the St. Lawrence. The removal of the obstructions between Lakes St. Francis and St. Louis, recently surveyed by Messrs. Maillefert and Raasloff, and enlarging the locks on the Provincial canals would open this navigation throughout to the ocean for steamers of the largest class, and reduce the interior freights to minimum prices. While, on the other hand, the discontinuance of the public bounty between Liverpool and New York, or the giving of aid to the same extent between Quebec and Liverpool, for building up a marine of equal capacity and speed, would reduce the ocean freights in the same proportion, and bring back the trade to its natural channel; great encouragement would also be given towards the establishment of so desirable an object, by the construction at Quebec of tidal docks, for which the greatest facilities exist, and the revenues from which, when made, it is expected would amply repay the cost."

" Regarding the vast magnitude to which the lake trade must reach, the extent and excellence of its navigation, this route presents an inland communication that, *for grandeur in outline and commercial importance, has no equal on the globe.* The idea of a vessel of 750 tons loading at an inland port, and proceeding without breaking bulk two thousand miles, without meeting currents in either direction, to reach a port on the ocean, can nowhere else be indulged."

The Kingston Board of Trade, in their letter during this year, to the Chairman of the Committee appointed by the Legislature on "Trade and Commerce," say: "This Board desire also to urge upon the Legislature the importance of constructing a canal to connect the St. Lawrence with Lake Champlain, as a means of drawing through our own waters a share of the immense and rapidly increasing trade between the Eastern and Western States, and which cannot be brought so near our principal sea port without producing beneficial results, over and above those flowing merely from the transit of property through the country."

The Montreal Board of Trade has repeatedly urged the necessity of this improvement on the attention of Government, while petitions from almost every part of the country have been presented in favour of its construction.

With this canal constructed, the question would then be, whether the route via Oswego to New York and the Eastern States by canal would offer greater facilities as to cost and time than via the River St. Lawrence and the canal into Lake Champlain. In the one case the 750 tons vessel could proceed to Whitehall, with only 56 miles of canal navigation (for the St. Lawrence Canals would not be used in the downward voyage,) while there would remain 72 miles of canal navigation from Lake Champlain to the Hudson River, against 292 miles of canal navigation via Oswego to the Hudson. By this improvement, therefore, not only could the large vessels from lake ports in Canada proceed to Whitehall, there to discharge their cargo, instead of as now at Oswego, but a large portion of Western United States trade would be diverted from its present channels, by a route superior to them in cost and time. I have referred to Whitehall as being the terminus of the navigation for vessels of 750 tons. At that place, as I have already stated, there is a canal of 72 miles, connecting the lake with the Hudson River, over which the Government of Canada has no control. The State of New York may not enlarge that canal to an equal size with the proposed canal into Lake Champlain, but I think it reasonable to suppose that the advantages which Boston and other ports in the New England States would gain by landing the products of the West, and shipping their manufactures destined for the West, at Burlington in Vermont, would be so great that New York would not long suffer this 72 miles of inferior navigation to divide her from the advantages of a direct communication in vessels of 750 tons with the head of Lake Superior.

Again, the full development of the resources of the great valley of the Ottawa is intimately connected with the construction of this canal. Every season more clearly shews that the United States will continue to furnish an ever increasing market for Canadian timber, and the construction of this canal into Lake Champlain would, by lessening transport from the Ottawa, give an increased value to the production of the forests in that region, and would also be the first link in a chain of internal navigation, through that valley to the head of Lake Superior, which the trade of the country lying south and west of that lake will at no distant day render necessary.

As a financial measure, also, these works are of great importance. The Welland and St. Lawrence Canals cost the Province £3,446,780. The annual interest is £206,000. The largest gross revenue was £108,000, while the largest net revenue has only been £50,000, shewing an annual loss of £150,000, representing a capital of £2,500,000 at 6 per cent., while the cost of the canal into Lake Champlain, and the enlargement of the Welland, would not exceed the sum of £1,500,000. The interest on this sum would be £90,000, while the tolls paid to the State of New York by Canada West alone this season will exceed £100,000. The present Erie Canal yields a gross revenue of £800,000.

If these statements as to our power of competition be correct then it must be apparent that to divide this large and increasing revenue, obtained by the State of New York, by tolls on trade from the Western States and Canada, is a matter of the greatest Provincial importance.

The speedy completion of both of these great projects seems to me to be also necessary in consequence of the immense interest which the people of Canada have in the Grand Trunk Railway. When the track of that road is completed from Brockville to Toronto, our investment in that work will be £3,771,000, the interest upon which amount and for which the Province is liable, will be £226,299 per annum. This work can only be successful in proportion to our power of attracting through the St. Lawrence, by navigation, the great stream of Western United States and Western Canadian trade, which now flows across the lakes to American ports. If we fail in doing this, passengers and freight will continue to be carried by American canals and railroads.

If I am correct in my view that the enlargement of the Welland Canal, and the construction of a canal into Lake Champlain, will have the effect of making the St. Lawrence the best route either for export to the ocean or into the Eastern United States, then the Grand Trunk Railroad will become a valuable and vast auxiliary, in bringing from the West articles of freight, such as live stock, fresh provisions, vegetables, fruits, &c., for which the water lines are not adapted, and it will also afford us those facilities at Quebec and Montreal, in conveying westward passengers and descriptions of freight too valuable to be forwarded by the slow but cheaper water lines.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the railway ever can compete, with a parallel navigation adapted for steam vessels of 750 tons, in the transport of heavy and cheap goods. To prove this I would refer to some facts collected by Mr. McAlpine, the eminent State Engineer of New York, by which he shews the relative business done on canals and railroads. He says :

1st. "That the whole tonnage transported on the St. Lawrence canals is 15 per cent., and that transported on the Pennsylvania canals 23 per cent., of that transported on the New York canals.

2nd. "That the tonnage arriving at tide water by the St. Lawrence canals is 15 per cent., and that by the Pennsylvania canals is 25 per cent., of that arriving by the New York canals.

3rd. "That the tonnage from the Western States passing through the St. Lawrence canals, and that passing through the Pennsylvania canals, are each 7 per cent. of that passing through the New York canals.

4th. "That the tonnage from the Atlantic, destined for the Western States, by way of the St. Lawrence canals, is 13 per cent., and by way of the Pennsylvania canals is 20 per cent., of that by way of the New York canals.

5th. "That the whole tonnage of the New York Northern Railroad is 6 per cent., of the New York and Erie is 14 per cent., and of the Baltimore and Ohio is 7 per cent., of the tonnage of the Erie Canal.

6th. "That the tonnage shipped from the western terminus eastward by the Northern Railroad is 8 per cent., by the New York Central is 3 per cent., by the New York and Erie is 4 per cent., by the Pennsylvania is 2 per cent., and by the Baltimore and Ohio is 3 per cent., of that shipped by the Erie Canal.

7th. "That the tonnage shipped from the eastern terminus westward by the Northern Railroad is 5 per cent., by the New York Central is 11 per cent., by the New York and Erie is 22 per cent., by the Pennsylvania is 5 per cent., and by the Baltimore and Ohio is 10 per cent., of that shipped by the Erie Canal ; that the through tonnage carried by the Northern Railroad is 8 per cent., by the New York Central is 2 per cent., by the New York and Erie 3 per cent., by the Pennsylvania and also by the Baltimore and Ohio is 2 per cent., of that carried by the Erie Canal."

"It would thus appear that the business of the New York

"canals exceeds the combined business of all the Canadian and  
"Pennsylvanian canals, and the New York, and the Pennsylvania,  
"and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroads *by 40 per cent.*, and that  
"the western business done by the New York canals is *three times*  
"*as great as the aggregate business of all the other lines*, and also  
"that the chief part of the business done by these lines is local  
"traffic of the country through which they pass."

In urging the importance of these improvements on your attention, I have done so, not from any sectional point of view, but as measures calculated to advance the general interests of the Province. I believe that when public money is applied to construct public works, the aim should be public and not sectional advantage. When public works are carried out on this principle, sectional interest will be in the end best promoted, and it will depend on the enterprise of the people whether or not the particular advantages of each locality shall be developed to the utmost extent. If this is not done on routes of trade where the public advantages may be nearly equal, a preference will be given to those ports where the enterprise of the inhabitants have created the greatest facilities. At Chicago, Oswego, Buffalo and Ogdensburgh, every means has been taken by which time and money can be saved in loading and discharging property. Charges for storing, shipping and handling of goods are reduced to the smallest cost. If the same means are not adopted in Canadian ports to obtain trade, it is evident that with equal advantages in public works, with our southern neighbours, we should fail to attract it. In Lower Canada, I have shewn that with our present means of transport the competition for the western trade is out of the question, either for export via the St. Lawrence to sea, or for shipment to the Eastern States for consumption. I have also shewn that with our present means of transport by water, it is almost impossible that our railways can be successful. With the Welland Canal enlarged, Lake Champlain connected by canal with the St. Lawrence, on a scale for vessels of 750 tons, and with the railways completed, Canada would be in a position to compete for the Great Western business with any improvements which it is possible to make in the United States. With such improvements, completed, Lower Canada would have at least an equal chance with Oswego or Buffalo, and if the inhabitants of Quebec and Montreal added the facilities and conveniences

for trade of which their ports are susceptible, there is no doubt on my own mind that a very large share of the import and export trade, either by sea or the Eastern States, would flow through the St. Lawrence as the best and most rapid channel.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN YOUNG.

Montreal, 4th December, 1855.

TO THE CITIZENS OF MONTREAL.

In a letter to the Honorable F. Lemieux, Chief Commissioner of Public Works, I took occasion to direct attention to the present depressed and unsatisfactory state of Canadian Trade on the St. Lawrence, and showed the superiority of cheapness of the present routes through the United States, over the Canadian route, for the transport of western produce to the sea-board. From the facts and figures there quoted the general result will be found established ;—that it is impossible for Canada without increased facilities for transport, to compete with the United States lines for the trade of the West ;—that our carrying trade since the passing of the United States Bonding Acts and the abolition of differential duties is as nothing compared with what it ought to be, or with that of the State of New York ;—and that unless Canada is content to see her vast natural advantages remain undeveloped, and the trade of Upper Canada and of the West *crossing over* instead of descending the lakes and the St. Lawrence, an effort should be made to remedy this state of things. In that letter I advocated as remedies two great measures :

First, ENLARGING THE WELLAND CANAL ;—and second,  
CONSTRUCTING A SHIP CANAL TO CONNECT THE WATERS OF  
THE ST. LAWRENCE WITH THOSE OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN ; and  
expressed my conviction that by these measures successfully car-  
ried out, our rates of freight upwards and downwards would be  
diminished ;—that the Canadian route would become attractive to

emigrants by steamers of 750 tons coming down and meeting the ocean ship at Quebec or Montreal, and conveying them with but one transhipment to western lake ports ;—that the New England States could be supplied with western products, by a more direct and better route, than the large sums at present paid to the State of New York for the transport of Canadian products, (which for this year will be at least \$400,000,) might be to a great extent diverted into the Canadian treasury ;—that our Public Works so enlarged and improved would be a source of revenue instead of a loss and charge upon the country as at present ;—and finally, that by these facilities Canada would be enabled to compete successfully even with the enlarged Erie Canal for the gigantic trade of the West.

In advocating these measures, I did so upon no sectional or local, but upon public grounds, and as public and not local works, and expressed my opinion that being public works they should be so made and located as best to secure public benefit. But it is no less true that to secure the great prize, there is much left to be accomplished by individual and local enterprise, and that when these Public Works are so finished it will rest upon the inhabitants of each particular locality to develop its own particular advantages. Local enterprise must assist and take advantage of the Public Works, in the great object in view, that of affording facilities to trade by reducing charges and time to the lowest possible extent. As a citizen of Montreal, therefore, I address to my fellow-citizens my views upon what Montreal should do in the present aspects of her trade, and the advantages which she may secure from the great improvements alluded to. The public views indicated in my letter to Mr. Lemieux, as bearing on the general and public interest, may well be followed up by considerations having reference more particularly to Montreal. The one class of considerations does not exclude the other. The public interests demand the speedy execution of these works as *Public Works*, but each locality has its own duties and interest in respect of these works. Quebec, Kingston, Toronto, and every port or place on the line of trade may and ought each to see, and that speedily, what each can do to aid these works, and what particular advantage it can gain from their being carried out. For my own part, I am convinced that every port and place on the banks of

the St. Lawrence and Ottawa would derive its own share of the advantages of the improvements. The trade is so large and will become so enormous as the West fills up, and the cheap and speedy natural channels are improved, that it is difficult to conceive what it will amount to and how much advantage it will prove to each locality. But I have at present to do only with Montreal. If you differ from the views I express, you will of course refuse to assist in carrying them out, and they will thus remain simply as opinions without being carried into practical effect.

In regard to the location of one of the great works alluded to in my letter to Mr. Lemieux, that of a Ship Canal into Lake Champlain, I am aware that many of you entertained opinions wholly at variance with mine. Since the time I first publicly urged the necessity of the canal in 1846, I have contended that it should be located wherever the levels should be found most favorable, and the general trade be best promoted ;—that the best route was that which should reduce freight and charges to the lowest point; and I then expressed the opinion that such location would be found above the Lachine Rapids. In this opinion Mr. Mills, in his Report of Survey in 1847 agreed, and also Mr. Jarvis in his Survey of 1854. The latter gentleman points out the advantages of a navigable feeder from the upper level of the Beauharnois Canal,—a suggestion which I think most valuable. But it is in vain to deny that the great majority of you dissented strongly from the plan of locating the canal so far above the city, and that a good deal of feeling was manifested in the expression of this dissent. I have reason to think that the same dissent does not prevail so extensively at present, and I submit to your consideration, whether the views I have hitherto held are not correct, namely, that subjecting the western vessel in passing from the St. Lawrence into Lake Champlain in the out and return voyage to 184 feet of unnecessary lockage would be to increase the cost of transport so as most materially to interfere with the usefulness of the canal. Why should the portion of the trade on the St. Lawrence destined for the Eastern States and for New-York descend through the Lachine Canal, 46 feet to be lifted up again, another 46 feet to the same level, before it can proceed to overcome the difference in level between the St. Lawrence and the lake? Would not the

extra time and extra lockage embarrass and impede trade, and increase the cost of transport, and, to that extent, diminish our power of competition with the routes through the State of New York?

But suppose the canal completed according to the wise and most valuable suggestion of Mr. Jarvis, with a navigable feeder from the upper level of the Beauharnois Canal, and with an entrance from Caughnawaga, let us see what would be the advantages then possessed by Montreal. At present as shewn in my letter to Mr. Lemieux, all the trade we can at present attract down the St. Lawrence is but paltry and insignificant. Look for instance at the amount of the trade attracted to Oswego, with its position far inferior to that of Montreal, when the communications referred to are completed. The receipts of *grain alone* at Oswego and Buffalo, *in the month of November*, exceeded six millions of bushels; while the total receipts at Montreal, *from the opening of navigation*, of all kinds of grain, was only 1,310,194 bushels. The receipts of Canada wheat at Oswego, *in the month of October*, was 672,000 bushels, while the receipts at Montreal, from Western Canada in the same month was only 12,500 bushels, and in November, was only 23,000.

It appears evident to me, that with the improvements completed, the St. Lawrence would have an advantage over the Oswego route, by affording facilities by which the vessel of 750 tons from the upper lakes could proceed to Whitehall without breaking bulk, at which point there is a canal navigation of 72 miles to the Hudson River, adapted for boats of 90 tons; whereas if the vessel discharged at Oswego, there would be a similar canal of 260 miles to the Hudson. Why should not these facilities produce the same results for Montreal as have been produced for Oswego? If the vessel of 750 tons could meet the ocean ship at Montreal, or Quebec, the facilities for transport to the ports of the Lower Provinces, the West Indies, and from all foreign ports must attract a large amount of freight and passengers, which at present find their way to the West through the United States. More especially may this result be anticipated when it is considered that Montreal is nearer Liverpool, by about 200 miles, by a direct navigable line, than New York is by the sea route. So that the distance to Liverpool from

Oswego via New York would be about 400 miles *more*, than from Oswego to Liverpool via the St. Lawrence.

No doubt much requires to be done in addition, and as aids to the great projects which I contend for. Insurance will require to be more nearly equalized between the two great routes. This can be done by more lights being properly placed along the Gulph of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic coasts, and I have no doubt that this once effected, the very important item of insurance which at present bears heavily on our trade would be materially diminished.

Another subject of vital importance to Montreal is that of *the deepening of Lake St. Peter*, and improvement of the river navigation. With the history of this great improvement you are all aware; and the time has now arrived when Montreal can with justice claim that this improvement should no longer be viewed as a *local* improvement. The improvement was treated at first as one of the great public Provincial undertakings for the benefit of the trade of the whole Province. That it is such a work is manifest, and the more so when viewed in connexion with the great projects of the improvement of the Welland, and the construction of the ship canal into Lake Champlain. The deepening of the lake was commenced, and carried on at the expense of Government, and large sums of public money expended, until in 1847 it became evident that the expenditure was useless, and that the wrong channel was taken for the improvement. This led to the abandonment of the work; and although the interests of Montreal rendered it necessary that another attempt at improving the channel should be made at the risk and cost of the trade of the city, by a tax on the tonnage of this port, it is no less manifest that the time has now come when such a tax should be withdrawn. The experiment tried at the risk of Montreal has not proved a blunder, but has already succeeded as completely as was hoped for. Lake St. Peter has been deepened from a depth of 11 feet at low water, to a depth of 16 feet 6 inches, and will be opened next fall throughout to a depth of 18 feet, with a channel 300 feet wide. The tax on vessels drawing over 10 feet water, now in existence, should be removed; and it should be one of the first subjects for your consideration as citizens of Montreal, to set before the Government and the public of Canada, the *justice* and necessity of removing it,

and of the assumption by Government of the debt due by the Montreal Harbour Commissioners, for the improvement of the lake and river, as well as the expense yet to be incurred of securing a twenty feet channel. Were this done Montreal would at once be able to enter upon and complete another work, legitimately falling on her, and to which I again invite your attention, namely: THE CONSTRUCTION OF A HARBOUR AT MONTREAL, ON A SCALE COMMENSURATE WITH A TWENTY FEET CHANNEL FROM THE OCEAN, AND THE NECESSITIES OF THE WESTERN TRADE, as developed by the improvements of the Welland and Champlain Canals.

My firm conviction is that without such a harbour the twenty feet channel will prove but of little benefit to us, and that if such a harbour is not constructed the value of the whole improvement will be much lessened. The one expenditure will prove nearly useless, unless we are willing to incur the other. I have always held this to be true, and am every day more and more convinced, that Montreal, in spite of the heavy charges already imposed on its trade, by the necessity of further taxation for the drainage and water works of the city, must not shrink from the further cost of constructing a harbour on the scale above alluded to. But if Government would agree to assume the payment of the debentures already issued by the Harbour Commissioners for deepening the lake, and such other expense as may yet be necessary to deepen the channel in lake and river to 20 feet, which will probably not exceed the sum of £30,000, then the Harbour Commissioners would be at liberty to borrow money for the construction of docks adapted to the trade and navigation.

To get the accommodation necessary by improvements in the present harbour is, in my opinion, wholly impracticable. The present wharves and harbour must remain as they are. To deepen the harbour to any considerable extent would undermine the whole of the wharves, and render new constructions necessary, at a sacrifice wholly beyond our means. But although the present harbour is adapted to steamers and vessels of considerable size, from sea and the upper lakes, yet it is unfit, if not dangerous, for vessels of the largest class.

The completion of the Welland and Champlain Canals, on the scale indicated, would attract to our port such a number of western propellers and vessels, as in a very few years to render the

